DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 364 963 EA 025 498

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TITLE Renewing America's Schools: A Guide for School-Based Action.
REPORT NO ISBN-1-55542-543-7
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 187p.
AVAILABLE FROM Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 (U.S. sales); Maxwell Macmillan International Publishing Group, 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (sales outside U.S.).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Democracy; *Educational Change; Educational Philosophy; Educational Policy; Educational Principles; Elementary Secondary Education; *Governance; Organizational Climate; School Effectiveness; *School Restructuring

ABSTRACT

This book describes the premises and practices of how schools become democratic, moral, and purposeful. The introduction describes the need for schools to reclarify their enduring purpose in a democratic society and provides an overview of the status of public education as quite different from most commission reports and media stories. Part 1 presents a three-dimensional framework for creating a moral and democratic school. Chapter 2 explores the first dimension, that of developing a school covenant based on core principles of teaching and learning. The third chapter explains the second dimension, which entails developing a charter for school decision making. Chapter 4 describes the third dimension, the critical-study process, which helps a school make informed decisions and assess student learning. Part 2 outlines the internal educational work of schools and the necessary policy changes, and concludes that school renewal should be viewed as an ongoing process. The fifth chapter describes the educational tasks that schools have within their control, and the sixth chapter focuses on internal issues. Chapter 7 raises questions about comparing current educational practices with optimal conditions of learning. Chapters 8 and 9 examine the school district's role in school renewal and the dilemmas encountered in school change. Chapter 10 concludes with a realistic portrayal of what school communities can achieve when renewal is a permanent condition of school life. Seven tables and four figures are included. Appendices contain a description of Foxfire core practices, a sample charter of democratic governance, the Peakview School Charter, and the Georgia Schools for the Future Program's policy statement. (LMI)

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